

Common Council Sidewalk Committee
16 October 2006, Noon
McCloskey Room
401 N. Morton

Meeting Memorandum

In attendance:

Committee Members: Dave Rollo, Andy Ruff, Chris Sturbaum and Tim Mayer.

Staff: Jane Fleig (Utilities), Scott Robinson (Planning), Bob Woolford (HAND) Justin Wykoff (Engineering) & Dan Sherman and Stacy Jane Rhoads (Council Office).

I. Greenways Report

Scott Robinson distributed copies of the *Greenways Map* (the *Map*) and reminded the Committee that it has been over five years since the adoption of the *Alternative Transportation and Greenways System Plan* (the *Plan*). While the *Map* is a vision of what the City would like to accomplish, the *Plan* identifies near-term priorities by detailing capital improvements over a 10-year time frame. The first five years of the *Plan* identified many projects that were targeted as high priorities and were foreseen as reasonable improvements to accomplish given the fiscal resources available and various design elements/constraints associated with a specific project. The subsequent five years are considerably vaguer. Beyond 10 years, the *Plan* is silent and does not provide any strategic direction.

The Planning Department has laid the groundwork for updating the *Plan* by walking the Greenways area and documenting all existing and proposed projects. This data will allow staff to propose new priorities as the update process continues. Additionally, staff will work to clarify sections of the *Plan* where the need for such clarification has surfaced. Opportunities also exist to coordinate the City's *Plan* with that of the County. Please note that the official *Plan* update process will commence in early 2007. Any change to the *Plan* will ultimately come before the Council as the *Plan* is part of the City's *Growth Policies Plan*.

The *Plan* has identified several sections of sidewalks within the City that are priorities to implement over the long-term goals. To date, the status of existing inventories listed in the strategic plan mentioned above is as follows:

- Southdowns Drive from Woodlawn to Jordan – pedestrian and bicycle lanes installed
- Maxwell Lane from Sheridan to Rose – multi-year phased project near completion with sidewalks installed, the final two sections have been designed for future construction
- Hillsdale Drive/Eastgate Lane from 7th to 45/46 bypass – sidewalks installed
- East 10th from Grandview to Bell Trace – sidewalks installed
- Park Ridge Road from Morningside to Sheffield – sidewalks installed
- Country Club Road from Rockport to Walnut – multiphase project using roadway capital improvements to implement sidewalk and sidepath, designs completed, ROW acquired

- College Mall Road from 2nd to Moores Pike – sidewalks installed
- Grimes Lane from Henderson to Woodlawn – sidewalks installed
- Rhorer Road from Victor Oolitic Trail to Sare Road – no change in status
- Intersection of 17th and Fee is slated for modernization and will address safety concerns with construction of sidepath and sidewalks at this intersection, no change for the rest of the corridor
- Rogers Street/Kinser Pike from 2nd to 45/46 – intermittent sections of sidewalk installed for recent development requirements, no change in status

Sturbaum asked, in walking the map, did Planning identify any needed sidewalks that are not listed on the map?

Robinson reminded the Committee that Greenways is not focused exclusively on sidewalks, but also focuses on sidepaths and multi-use trails. However, he offered that, in his opinion, a sidewalk is needed on East Third in the Green Acres neighborhood. Approximately 2,800 feet of sidewalk is absent from the north side of Third from Bryan Avenue to the 45/46 By-pass. A worn pedestrian path demonstrates the heavily-used corridor to access commercial uses to the east. Robinson stated that pedestrian safety concerns are a top priority for this corridor.

Rollo noted that on the *Greenways Map*, the Jackson Creek trail is shown going up Jackson Creek to Sycamore Knolls, yet it is commonly understood that there is not enough easement there. A correction to the map should be made. Rollo also pointed out that an asphalt trail running along the creek poses environmental dangers and that a crushed limestone pathway may be more appropriate.

Robinson pointed out that the City currently does not have sufficient right-of-way to proceed with the trail behind the houses on High. Current homeowners are resistant to the trail running through their backyards. Sturbaum suggested that since the *Map* serves as policy guidance, it might make sense to keep the route on the *Map* in the event that subsequent property owners are amenable to the location of the trail.

Ruff echoed the idea that some prospective owners might actually seek out property with such a trail and in the long-term, the location of the trail might be feasible.

Sturbaum asked if it might be possible to explain the reasoning behind keeping the trail on the map when the new map is introduced? He suggested that staff explain why the trail may not be possible in the short-term, but in the long-term would be ideal.

Rollo stated that he values Planning's walking analysis of the *2006 Sidewalk Inventory* because he has noticed several areas that are virtually impassable, such as Atwater on the south side and the intersection of Hillside and Nancy.

Robinson pointed out that currently, the Inventory is a quantitative document that maps all existing sidewalks. Notably, the map does not account for the condition of the sidewalks nor the accessibility of the walks, such as ADA ramps, width and impediments such as utility poles, tree roots, etc. The goal of the Planning Department is to move toward a document that also captures qualitative data in the interest of facilitating future decision making regarding capital improvements. A pilot study, using GPS technology,

is planned for this year to study the possibilities of implementing a qualitative analysis of the sidewalk network.

II. Review of On-going Council Sidewalk projects

Wykoff reviewed the status of Council sidewalk projects.

- **Queens Way** (from High to Sussex) -- Completed.
- **Roosevelt** (between 4th and 5th Street) – The project has been bid and Engineering is working with Utilities to identify any possible drainage problems. Engineering has a contractor but needs to work out issues downstream between Clark and 4th Street. Wykoff anticipates progress to pick up.
- **East Second Street** - Woodcrest to 300' east (north side) – The Committee funded design for this last year and the design has been completed. The estimated cost of construction is approximately \$30-\$35,000. Wykoff stated that he will e-mail Sturbaum the exact figures. There is no stormwater work required here. However, as the Committee discussed last year, a big white pine will have to be removed. The City does not have sufficient right-of-way to avoid the tree's roots and Urban Forester, Lee Huss, told Wykoff that the tree's roots were too shallow and would likely not survive the sidewalk. Additionally, the tree is plagued by parasites. Wykoff offered to re-examine the plan to see if any way the tree could be saved, but did not think it was likely.

Sturbaum stated that if the project is built, the Committee could require that trees be planted. Wykoff offered that a 2-3" caliper tree costs \$200-\$300.

- **East Eleventh Street** – Washington to Lincoln (north side) – The Committee funded design for this last year and the design has been completed. Of the four designs funded by the Committee last year, this project garnered the most negative public reaction. Some neighbors are concerned with the loss of greenspace. This project was driven by Councilmember Volan as a linkage, but it is unclear if the residents want a sidewalk. Engineering invited all residents within a 200 foot radius to attend a meeting to discuss the sidewalk, not many came in support. The cost of construction is \$50,000-\$60,000. Wykoff reminded the Committee that during the Neighborhood Walk in the Fall of 2004, residents expressed concern about the disrepair, not lack, of sidewalks. Since that time, the City has repaired 50-75 sidewalk areas in this neighborhood area as part of the Public Works Sidewalk Replacement Program. The neediest areas were those where tree roots were pushing up the walk. Public Works repaired these areas. The City provided labor and the residents paid for materials.

[Sturbaum asked if having residents pay for materials might be something the Sidewalk Committee might want to consider as a way to stretch its dollars. Wykoff responded the money saved would be a very small percentage of the entire project and likely not enough to fund another sidewalk project (materials estimated at between \$400 and \$600 per project). He further pointed out that

asking residents to pay for materials might just agitate some. Some people would refuse to pay while others would not and that would create dissention. Sturbaum summarized that if the Committee engaged in five sidewalk projects, it would only save \$2,500 by passing on the material costs to the residents – this is not enough to fund another sidewalk project.]

- **Arden** (between High and Windsor) – Design is complete. The price is still pending because of potential stormwater complications. Rollo pointed out that neighbors in Arden are really advocating for the installation of a sidewalk here.

Engineer Fleig pointed out that the stormpipe outlet is on top of a water main which is on top of the sewer line – it is not ideal to have three separate utilities on top of each other.

- **East Maxwell Lane**, north side (Sheridan to Highland) – This project has been designed and may be more expensive than anticipated. The road may be narrowed in the construction of the sidewalk.
- **Maxwell Lane**, north side (from Clifton Sidepath to High Street) – This project may be completed this year or may be re-bid for completion in 2007.
- **Nancy Street** (from Ruby to Marilyn) – Recall that the City had to re-design the sidewalk on Nancy to widen the street. Councilmember Rollo pointed out that motorists tend to speed down Nancy, so widening the street would be a mistake. An alternative to widening the street would be to move a gas line. The City will receive a new design from Bynum-Fanyo. However, the City would have to pay for the relocation of the gas line. The City will consult with the contractor to determine if the new plan is within range. If it is not, may have to kill the bid, re-appropriate the money and put the project up for re-bid.

Rollo stated that the Nancy Street project is a high-priority request and that the project be expedited. He stated that he has always requested the narrowing of the road.

- **Winfield Road**, eastside (from Fair Oaks Lane to existing Sidewalk south of Rechter Road) – This project was completed over the summer.

III. Criteria

Sherman reminded all that a few Committee members met in February 2006 to review ways to tighten up the criteria and procedure for the 2007 Council Sidewalk Committee.

The current criteria governing funding decisions is as follows and mapped out in the *1995 Linkages Plan – Criteria for Project Selection/Prioritization*, summarized below:

- Safety Considerations – A particular corridor could be made significantly safer by the addition of a sidewalk.
- Roadway Classification – The amount of vehicular traffic will increase the likelihood of pedestrian/automobile conflicts, which a

- sidewalk could prevent. Therefore, arterial and collector streets should be a priority for linkages over residential/subdivision streets.
- Pedestrian Usage -- Cost-effectiveness should be based on existing and projected usage.
- Proximity to Destination Points -- Prioritization of linkages should be based on proximity to elementary schools, shopping opportunities and parks/playgrounds.
- Costs/Feasibility – Availability of right-of-way and other construction costs must be evaluated to determine whether linkages are financially feasible.

Sherman suggested that another criterion that the Committee might want to consider is “synergy” – a focus on inter-departmental cooperation.

Rollo stated that the above-listed criteria still obtain and that synergy has always guided Committee decisions. Rollo pointed out that Councilmember Mayer has been especially key in striking synergies.

Sturbaum suggested that “Roadway Classification” figures into the Committee’s decision when all other criteria are equal, but thinks the criteria still work and do not need to be revised.

Mayer suggested that the “Proximity to Destination Points” criterion should include IU. For example, such a criterion would help highlight the lack of a sidewalk on Mitchell Street in the Eastside neighborhood. The Committee agreed to include IU as a destination point in this criterion.

IV. New Requests

- **Henderson**, east side (Maxwell Lane to Hillside Drive) – Jan Sorby of the Bryan Park Neighborhood Association submitted this request last year and requested reconsideration after it had been denied. Last year’s Committee decided that the project is expensive and redundant (given sidewalk on east side of the street) and that the City should encourage crosswalks that align with improvements in the Park and with some of the improvements to be made by the developer of the South Dunn project. This year, Susie Johnson proposes that the Committee provide design costs for Henderson which Wykoff estimates will cost about \$45,000.

Rollo suggested that since there are many possible solutions being discussed to foster safety around Templeton Elementary, he would like Public Works to analyze the proposals and present the Committee with a prudent response.

Rollo also asked if it is possible to build a raised asphalt cross walk? The crosswalks are a great concern to parents. Perhaps the crosswalk could be sited at the Grimes intersection since traffic does not stop, but the kids try to cross, there – in this area, motorists slow down, then blow through. Rollo also stated that the City might also use a utilities easement that runs north of Templeton. He and Sorby walked this area populated by trees and other growth.

Woolford echoed the need to study the area first.

Mayer pointed out that, for some residents and parents, a sidewalk on the west side of Henderson might not be the primary priority of the area. Mayer also offered that if the Henderson to Hillside stretch were redressed, then Grimes will bear much more. Mayer stated that the City must first fully assess the implications of any change.

Rollo agreed that the area warrants further study, but recommended that a raised crosswalk be installed as an added safety measure and a signal to the community that the Committee identifies this area as a priority and is moving ahead.

Wykoff offered that Engineering and Public Works will analyze the area and present possible solutions and report back to the Committee.

- **5th Street** from eastern dead end and as far west as can go and around Hillsdale (Mayer) -- This is a project started as a 2003 Sidewalk Committee proposal to install a sidewalk on the south side of the street. CBU has offered to provide approximately \$225,000 for the stormwater component of this project. Mayer would like to see this project realized.
- **Greenwood Avenue** (Rollo) from Covenanter to Greenwood -- This is an old sidepath crossing a drainage ditch that is used by residents and children going to school.
- **Nota Avenue** from Nota to Maxwell (Rollo) -- This is an old sidewalk between two properties used by children going to Rogers & Binford schools.
- **Palmer** from Wylie to First (Ruff) – This would provide the only north/south bicycle and pedestrian access from the Bryan Park neighborhood to campus and downtown between Lincoln and Henderson.
- **Broadview** (Sturbaum) – Sturbaum stated that he is thinking about proposing a project at Broadview, but is thinking it through. If he decides to make an official proposal, he will do so at the next Committee meeting.

V. Next Meeting

The Committee will next meet Monday, 06 November 2006 at Noon in the McCloskey Room.